Vol. VI. Numb 17

The EXAMINER.

From Friday July 16. to Monday July 19. 1714.

Senatus ab urbe fugatur. Florus.
——Præſens, abſens ut ſies. Terence.
Tendens venefranos in agros,
Aut Lacedæmonium Tarentum. Horace.

I HAVE made ſeveral Obſervations upon the different Conduct of *Whig* and *Tory*, during the Courſe of this laſt *Seſſion* of *Parliament*; ſome of which could not poſſibly eſcape the common Notice of almoſt every one, who is converſant in Affairs of this Nature; the reſt will perhaps appear to lie a little out of the ordinary Road, and both ſhall be communicated to the Publick at proper Intervals, and in the moſt Entertaining manner.

I have obſerv'd all along, that the Friends and Abettors of *Faction*, at leaſt the generality of them, notwithſtanding they ſtill aſſume to themſelves the Title of *Patriots*, *Sticklers* for *Liberty*, and *Lovers* of their *Country*, and go on Bantering Mankind with the ſtale *Ironical Tautology* of *Publick Spirit*, *Property*, *Rights of the Subject*, and the like plauſible Topicks; which, God be thanked, do ſtill continue in full force, in ſpite of their Attempts to leſſen their Credit and ſpoil their Meaning; have yet in all their Debates and Parliamentary Proceedings, acted and behav'd, rather as Advocates and Patrons of Diſorder and Confuſion, than as the *Repreſentatives*, or in the Phraſe of Mr. *S——e*, which obtain'd juſt after his *Expulſion*, the *Attorneys* of the People.

I am very Confident, if the honeſt, deluded, well-meaning moderate *Whigs* (that Race of Men is, I hope, not yet quite extinct) who are diſpers'd up and down in the *Counties*, *Cities* and *Boroughs* of *Great Britain*, and have *Votes* and *Elections*, were throughly acquainted with the Behaviour of their Friends within Doors: If they knew, how many of them brought up their private Piques and Reſentments, together with the Rage and Frenzy of their Party, to *Parliament*, and acted upon no other Spirit during the whole *Seſſion*: If they could imagin, how fond ſome of their Favourites were of *Liberty*, the only *Liberty* they are careful to maintain, I mean the *Liberty of Speech*; and how far they carried this Glorious Privilege. If they were to be told, how ſome of them came up as to an Expedition againſt the *Cro——n* and the *Min——y*, and made the *Senate-Houſe* the *Place of Battle*, and a *Stage* to fight *Prizes* on: If they had a true Account faithfully tranſmitted to them, of all the idle *Rumours*, malicious *Reflections*, groundleſs *Accuſations*, abſurd *Cavils*, unwarrantable *Railing*, and notorious *Untruths*, which have mingled themſelves with the Councils and Affairs of a Great and Wiſe People; which have made the Groſs and Subſtance of that noble *Stand* and gallant *Oppoſition* the *Whigs* gave out they were long ago preparing for; and which can admit of no Plea or Excuſe, but *Tyrannick Liberty* and *Unlimited Privilege*; they would certainly never more exert themſelves to ſupport the Intereſt of ſuch Patriots, nor be repreſented by Men ſo unlike the Meaneſt of the People, who have ſtill ſome Tincture of Loyalty in their Veins, and ſome regard in their Underſtandings for the Honour and Dignity of their Country. For how is it poſſible, that Principles and Meaſures deſtructive of Society, ſhould ever ſecure a State; or that thoſe bleſſed Managers, who would be a Scandal to any Age and Nation, ſhould ever prove the Supporters of the beſt Conſtitution upon Earth?

But moſt of theſe Diſorders and Irregularities, which bad Men are pleas'd with, which good Men lament, and which every indifferent Subject among us cannot reflect on, without a ſenſible Emotion and juſt Reſentment, ſhall, with my free Conſent, be utterly eras'd and forgotten, and deliver'd over to perpetual Oblivion; for the Honour of Parliaments, and becauſe no Stain nor Blemiſh may reſt upon a *Houſe* of *Commons*, which, by peruſing the Steps and Meaſures of the *Laſt*, have ſet that part of the Legiſlature in the moſt advantageous Light with our People, and have atton'd for almoſt all the publick Miſchiefs that ever deſecrated St. *Stephen*'s *Chapel*, ſince the Day it was firſt ſet apart and dedicated to the Service of the State. I the rather decline meddling in this Enquiry, becauſe very few if any of the Violences of the *Faction* have ſpread far into the Country; they have loſt Ground every Day, and have not prevail'd in any one Point, ſo as to make good the Menaces, with which they kept up the Spirits of their Followers: And therefore I am willing to make a Secret of all that Folly and Madneſs, which has not had its Effects, and is a Calamity only in Speculation, without being felt or bewail'd by the Collective Body of our Fellow Subjects. But that which I intend more particularly to Touch upon at preſent, is a Fault on the other ſide; of which the *Whigs* have often made conſiderable Advantage, and I am ſure the *Tories* will forgive me, if I mingle a little Severity with my Remarks, where I think the Cauſe is at Stake, and where a very little Care and Diligence will prevent all future Miſcarriages.

What I would be underſtood to Hint at, is the Buſineſs of *Parliamentary Attendance*; which, in all the *Books* and *Papers* of *Advice* to *Electors* or *Members*, that I ever yet ſaw, is, with good Reaſon, recommended as a very Uſeful and Neceſſary Qualification. It is really very ſurprizing, that Gentlemen ſhould be ſo forward and active to obtain a Seat in *Parl——t*, ſhould be at ſo much Pains (I will not ſay, *Expence*) on this account; and yet afterwards leave that Seat empty,

mpty, and in effect forfeit it by a voluntary Expulsion. The People, who are so unhappy to have such Representatives, are almost in as bad a Condition, as if they were really *Disfranchised*, and had their *Charter* taken from them; being depriv'd of their Consent to many Laws, for want of *Proxies* in the *Lower House*, and of the Privilege of being Govern'd by no Statutes, but those to which they are Parties in the Passing and Enacting them. A Publick-Spirited *Senator* would do well to consider, that all his Talents of a Political Nature, his Eloquence, Learning, Judgment, Diligence, his Head, Heart and Voice, are no longer so much his own as his Country's; and therefore not to be employ'd or dispos'd of in his own private Affairs, till the Publick Service is first over. In vain have the Laws taken care to suspend themselves, and laid Obstructions in the way of Justice, very often to the Prejudice and Damage of particular Persons, on purpose that Members might freely and constantly attend; when so many of them violate the Ends of this Privilege, and might justly be depriv'd of it, whenever they absent themselves from the Service of the *House*. The *Romans* thought it the greatest Hardship imaginable, as well as Injury to the Publick, when any of their *Conscript Fathers* were either driven from the *Senate*, or any ways aw'd or incommoded in their Attendance: And with us the *Imperial Power* or *Prerogative* is lessen'd, with respect to our *Representatives*, that they may follow the Business of *Par——t* without interruption. But wherefore is all this, if Gentlemen will absent themselves, when their Country calls for them, and throw the whole Burden and Charge of the Service upon others? Such *Secluded Members* must expect to be told (and the Justice of the Reproach is not easily to be avoided) that they value the empty Name and Honour, more than the Duty of their Station; and have more occasion for the *Privilege* of *Par——t*, than Satisfaction in the frequent Opportunity of *Protecting* others; than which there cannot be a Reflection that bears harder upon generous Minds, or upon Men devoted to the Publick Service, and professing a sincere Love for their Country.

The *Whigs* deserve all the Praise an Enemy can bestow, for their good Conduct on these Occasions; whereby they made the most of their *Little Body*, and fought it out bravely to a Man. Hence it was that they often gain'd an Advantage, by keeping close together, and falling in with any scatter'd Party of the *Disgusted*, the *Whimsical*, or other Flying Squadron of Dissenters, who were pleas'd to throw a Weight into their Scale; and this sometimes gave their Friends without Doors a Day of Triumph and Thanksgiving. Whilst the *Tories* are but too frequently and too justly complain'd of by their Acquaintance, for Thinning the *House*, and dispersing themselves, when their Presence really is, or is soon made to be most necessary: Whereby a good Cause is often expos'd, runs many and great Hazards, and the Ballance turns at last upon what they call a *Sneaking Majority*; of which the next *Whig Pamphlet* is sure to take seasonable Notice, by way of Refreshment to the *Faction*, as if the Accomplishment of their Hopes were still nearer to the View than ever.

'Tis true indeed, the *House* has Power to order *Calls*, to Summons the *Members* from the adjacent Places, or out of the Country by Letter to the Sheriffs, and none are to quit the Service for any time, but by *Special Leave*. However it is well known, that the Methods of *asking Leave*, or *excusing Attendance*, are so very easy, that the Duty is still left in a great Measure to the Honour, Conscience, and Publick Spirit of the *Patriot* and *Gentleman*.

Suppose the common Pretence of *Extraordinary Occasions* were always Real in its full Extent; yet it ought to be consider'd, as well what those *Extraordinary Occasions* are, which bring a Senator up to Town, as carry him back into the Country. The *Magna & Arduí Regni negocia* are of more Concern than the most urgent Occasions of a private Family; and that which excuses One, may serve as well for Five Hundred.

I would ask any of our Representatives, who is truly affected with the Good and Welfare of the Publick, whether an *Evening's Air*, a *Civil Visit*, a *Pleasurable Jaunt*, a *Race*, a *Cock-match*, or a *Court-Leet*, would make them any Amends or Satisfaction, for the Loss of a *Question*, or the Gaining of a Point to the Enemies, which they might regret all the Days of their Lives, and their Posterity after them?

Those, who are nearer, are still more inexcusable. Can a *Lobby* of *Pictures*, a *Court* of *Requests* full of *Noise* and *Hurry*, a *Tavern*, a *Pamphlet* or *Toy-shop*, the *Ring*, the *Park*, or the *Play*, afford any thing solid enough to come in Competition with the Service of the Senate, and the Business of a Nation? It is not impossible, but the Fate of *Britain* and of *Europe* may depend upon a single *Squire's* feeding *Ducks* in the *Park*, or crossing the Water to *Vaux-Hall*. If I mistake not, I have read somewhere, that whilst a Loyal West Country *Burgess* was Sauntering in the *Palace-Yard*, a *Question* was Lost in King *Charles* the First's Time, which might have prevented the ensuing *Rebellion*.

To those, who go away in Disgust, or out of Pique to some *Minister*, I could say many Things, as well in the way of Pity for Themselves, as for the Edification of the People they Represent. But at present it may suffice to tell them calmly, and with abundance of Phlegm, what may seem to Humour them; That if this be the only Reason of their going down, they ought to carry their Resentments so far, as never to come up again.

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